

# PILGRIM'S GUIDE

# UNIV

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UNIV INSPIRE

The Eternal City and UNIV  
Inspire welcome you back with  
open arms.



For all the pilgrim lifehacks  
flip through this guide.

**01** ALL YOU NEED  
TO KNOW

**02** RESOURCES  
FOR PRAYER

**03** FOLLOWING THE  
PATH OF THE  
EARLY CHRISTIANS

*To make this notebook easier to use, many icons and texts are hyperlinks.  
(For example: on the cover, selecting 2026 takes you to the calendar page.)*

# ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

SCHEDULE  
AND  
LOCATIONS

UNIV

CITIZENS OF  
OUR WORLD

UNIV  
LAB

UNSOLICITED  
ADVICE FOR  
TRAVELERS






# 01 ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

# CALENDAR - 2026 - SCHEDULE

29 SUNDAY	30 MONDAY	31 TUESDAY	01 WEDNESDAY
10.00h <b>Palm Sunday at Saint Peter's</b>			10.00h <b>Audience with the Pope</b>
	Opening 15.30h <b>17.00h</b> Saint Raphael get together with the Father  Closing hour 19.00h	Opening 15.30h <b>17.00h</b> <b>Conferencia UNIV Lab</b> UNIV Lab Keynote  <b>DINNER AT VILLA BALESTRA</b>  <b>19.30h-21.00h</b> <b>UNIV FEST</b> Closing hour 21.30h	Checkin from 12.00h 14.00h-18.15h <b>Workshops UNIVLab</b>  Closing hour 19.00h
02 THURSDAY	03 FRIDAY	04 SATURDAY	05 SUNDAY
			Urbi et Orbi Blessing (St. Peter's Square)
Mass of the Lord's Supper	Good Friday Liturgy	Easter Vigil	

 Events in /activities in **SMP**

 Events in /activities in **Villa Balestra (VB)**

 Activities in **PUSC (Pontifical University of the Holy Cross)**

# LOCATIONS

Events in **SMP**  
**OUR LADY OF PEACE**

Events in **Villa Balestra (VB)**

Events at the **PUSC**  
**(Univ. of the Holy Cross)**



# RENEW YOUR GAZE & LET YOURSELF BE INSPIRED



UNIV is an international gathering of young university students seeking to deepen their faith and life, and to fill their work with meaning.

*As part of UNIV Inspire, you'll have the opportunity to hear from experts and participate in problem-solving forums, as well as attend Easter Triduum ceremonies and participate in meetings with the Pope and the Prelate of Opus Dei.*



# "Citizens of our World"



**"Do not forget that, if there are things that divide, there are also always things that unite, which can foster respectful, friendly, and loyal relationships."**

**— Josemaría Escrivá**

Political violence is on the rise. War is rampant. Our virtual and technological culture makes it increasingly difficult to find spaces for real connection. Loneliness, anxiety, and fractured relationships are the result. When analyzing these various crises, we arrive at the same diagnosis: people have stopped talking to one another. How would our world change if we learned how to engage in dialogue again?

The word "dialogue" has Greek roots. Literally, it means "through the word," but for the ancient Greeks, it held a meaning of great depth. When contemplating the world, they noticed a logos, or logic, that seemed to order all of reality. They believed that it was precisely because of this order that reality was intelligible to them. A person who sought to explain reality spoke with logos if they were faithful to this inherent logic: their discourse was "rational."

True dia-logos, therefore, is not achieved solely through speech, but also through reason and reality. For the Greeks, this reality-oriented discussion was the key to intellectual growth.



UNIVLab 2026 is the place where we will explore the art of building bridges and engaging in dialogue where it matters most.

# LET YOURSELF BE INSPIRED!

By Universality, love  
and beauty



Bridges do not stand on fluid ground; they require foundations. In the same way, dialogue requires convictions. Philosophy and psychology help us understand the why and the how of our convictions and, therefore, of our dialogue. Human nature is rational and relational, but also fallible and free. Our capacity to know the truth is much greater when we talk things through. Psychologically, this requires openness, but also firmness. Personal convictions must be open to reality, not locked within themselves.

A person who forms their convictions in the pursuit of truth maintains a healthy curiosity, a willingness to adjust their stance if someone presents a perspective they hadn't seen before. Instead of closing off, their commitment to truth is precisely what opens them to others in dialogue.

If dialogue is a bridge, friendship is its buttress. Friendship is dialogue at the relational level. Moved by love, a friend takes interest, listens, tries to understand, speaks, faces conflicts, and knows how to rectify. Our times cry out desperately for this type of commitment to connection, to embodied relationality. Only by opening ourselves to the other do we come closer to the truth—about the world and even about ourselves.

Bridges are built with many types of materials. And dialogue at the social level takes many forms: free and vigorous debate, commitment to fundamental principles, a readiness for compromise... The goal is the common good. But only by listening to all members of our communities can we promote a good that is truly common. If we want words instead of weapons and plurality instead of polarization, we must commit ourselves to social dialogue, whether in politics or within our institutions.



**AND RETURN HOME  
TO INSPIRE!**

# UNIV



UNIV Inspire focuses on work as a place of personal growth and fulfillment, but fundamentally as a tool for serving others and society.



**Tool for  
service**

**UNIV Lab is a an international conference, a space of encounter, reflection and work.**

The objective is to gather young people and experts from the five continents to discuss concerns and propose answers to the challenges posed by today's culture, related to the theme of this year's UNIV.

**"Let us build bridges together and rediscover the art of dialogue"** <sup>10</sup>



**MODES OF PARTICIPATION:**

**LISTENER**  
Masterclass attendance

**PARTICIPANT**  
Masterclass attendance + participation in 2 workshops



**Juana Acosta**



**Hope Kean**

**Masterclass**



**Ilaria Vigorelli**



**Caitlin West**

"For more information from the experts, tap 'Masterclass'."



ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

# Expert-Led Workshops

**Reflection and dialogue** on different aspects of UNIVLab's theme, through hands-on, international, and interdisciplinary workshops of 40-50 people, led by **an expert in that field.**



**María  
Candela**

Josemaría Escrivá  
y el Diálogo Hoy



**Gretta  
Sánchez  
Alvarado**

Diálogo y Escucha



**Reyes Rite**

Resiliencia y Diálogo



**María Ángeles  
Chesa**

Diálogo en la Universidad  
según John Henry  
Newman



**María  
José  
Murcia**

Diálogo Social y  
Económico



**Maricruz  
Linares**

Diálogo Interno: de la  
Negación a la  
Aceptación



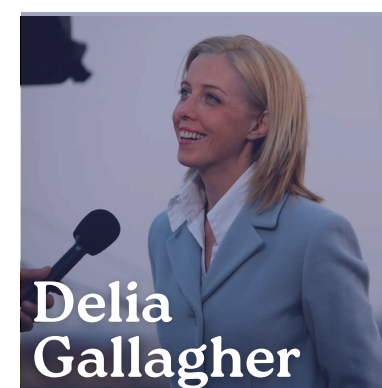
**Marcela  
Durán**

Discurso Político y  
Redes Sociales



**Victoria  
Gathogo**

Dialogue in the  
Workforce



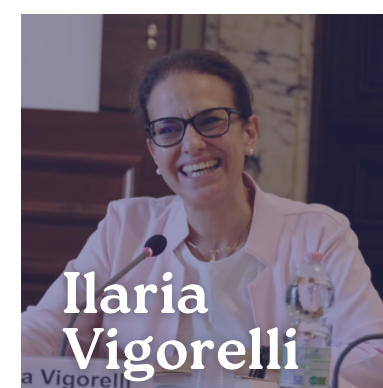
**Delia  
Gallagher**

Communication and  
Dialogue



**Mary Jo  
White**

Josemaría Escrivá and  
Dialogue Today



**Ilaria  
Vigorelli**

Philosophy and  
Dialogue



**Caitlin  
West**

Dialogue Through  
Theatre & Podcasts



**Juana  
Acosta**

Politics - Dialogue in  
Deep Conflict



**Hope  
Kean**

Neuroscience - Brain  
Science of Dialogue

**PLUS WE HAVE  
SOMETHING  
NEW FOR 2026**



## The UNIVLab Podcast

Extend the UNIV  
experience beyond  
Rome with our ongoing  
audio formation.



Did you take any  
photos? We want to  
see them!



Upload them here!

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

# UNSOLICITED ADVICE FOR TRAVELERS

Be **OPEN**: give, listen, pray, help, grow, meeting new people and above all: connect with Christ.

**WRITE** notes, ideas, inspiration, questions, things to remember..

**ACCOMMODATION**: Remember that the other travellers also need to sleep well in order to be prepared for the days ahead.

And if you want, you can **HELP** the Pope with your donation!



**DRINK** water: You need to stay hydrated; walking kilometers and kilometers in Rome can be very tiring. Luckily, all the street fountains have drinking water.

**GOOD** footwear: Trust me, you'll need it. Comfort above all!

And... **DANCE** a little? Enjoy the company, your friends, life! And when you notice the mood in your group dropping a bit, you can give a little boost.

## ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

**FOOD.** Tips for finding food in Rome: 'Zomato' is a free and well-informed app, and Google recommendations are very reliable.

**TIRED?** Rest and recharge at the 'Support Places':

- Centro Internazionale Rocca Romana: Viale Romania, 5
- Arcogrande: Viale delle Belle Arti, 6
- ICEF: Viale delle Belle Arti, 10

**COMMUNICATE** in Italian: While you're in Rome, try some basic Italian phrases:

- Ciao - Hi and goodbye
- Grazie mille - Thank you so much
- Vorrei una pizza per favore! - I would like a pizza please
- Potresti farci una foto? - Could you take a picture of us?
- Dove c'è un bagno? - Where is the bathroom?



## MUST DO'S

- Speak Italian
- Write a letter to the Pope and pop it in the Vatican postbox
- Try pistachio gelato
- Sketch among the artists in Piazza Navona
- Meet the Pope
- Put your hand in the mouth of Truth
- Talk to the Father
- Send a postcard
- Catch the sunset from the top of Pinccio lookout
- Peak through the Knights of Malta keyhole
- Share a Margherita pizza
- Bike through cobblestone streets
- Throw a coin in the Trevi Fountain
- Afternoon stroll through Trastevere
- Pray at the tomb of John Paul II and Benedict XVI
- Reenact Roman Holiday or the Lizzy Mcguire movie
- Walk the Via Apia



# 02 RESOURCES FOR PRAYER

# RESOURCES FOR PRAYER

STEP INTO  
THE GOSPEL

HOLY  
WEEK  
SERVICES

YOUTH  
WEB

PRAYERS  
AFTER MASS

EXAMINATION  
OF CONSCIENCE

AFTER  
CONFESSION



## HOLY MONDAY

“SIX DAYS BEFORE the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead.” Jesus felt at home there among his friends, surrounded by their affection. He has often been in Bethany, but this is a more solemn moment. He is going to Jerusalem, where he knows the Cross is waiting for him. “They made him a supper. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at table with him. Mary took a pound of costly ointment of pure nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the ointment” (Jn 12:1-3).

Everyone knew that the religious authorities were seeking to do away with Jesus. Mary’s love enables her to sense what is to befall Jesus. So she wants to do something special for her Lord, to show her love for him. She takes her most valuable possession, expensive perfume of pure nard, and pours it over Jesus’ feet. She breaks the jar, giving everything to her Lord and God.

Some of those present angrily point to the futility of this gesture. We know that Judas Iscariot also took part in this criticism, not because he wanted that expensive item to be

put to better use, but perhaps because it clashed with his own lifestyle. Mary, however, is silent. She gives no heed to the comments her gesture has provoked. Her only concern is to make our Lord feel at home, and therefore Jesus speaks out in her defense.

“Mary offers Jesus the most precious thing she has and with a gesture of deep devotion. Love does not calculate, does not measure, does not worry about expense, does not set up barriers, but can give joyfully; it seeks only the good of the other, surmounts meanness, pettiness, resentment and the narrow-mindedness that human beings sometimes harbor in their hearts.”[1]

WHOEVER GIVES EVERYTHING to God becomes a gift for others as well. On the contrary, whoever calculates carefully when faced with Christ’s call, ends up haggling with others as well. When we truly say ‘yes’ to our Lord, we bring to others “the good aroma of Christ” (cf. 2 Cor 2:15). As happened in Bethany, we could say that “the house was filled with the fragrance of the ointment” (Jn 12:3). Hence our life too, guided by God’s strength, can fill the world with Christ’s fragrance. We ask Martha, Mary and Lazarus, whose memorial Pope Francis has wanted the Church to celebrate every 29th of July, to help us fill our life and that of our families and friends with the fragrance their own home had. Today in Bethany Christ’s death is also announced, when he speaks about “the day of my burial” (Jn 12:8). But his death will give rise to an abundant torrent

of Life – clear and radiant – for all men and women! Jesus asks us to accompany him closely, since “if our will is not ready to die in accord with the Passion of Christ, neither will Christ’s life be in us.”[2] But we must not wait for extraordinary occasions to show Jesus our love. Each of our days is a new opportunity to serve him, to offer him our life and employ it generously in his service, following faithfully in his footsteps.

What we have in our hands will almost always be little things, but things a small child can offer with love: “Sometimes we feel inclined to act as little children. What we do then has a wonderful value in God’s eyes and, so long as we don’t let routine creep in, our ‘little’ actions will indeed be fruitful with the unfailing fruitfulness of Love.”[3]

“WHAT JOY to contemplate Jesus in Bethany! A friend of Lazarus, Martha and Mary! He goes there to recover his strength when he is tired. Jesus has his home there. There are souls there who appreciate him. There are also souls who come close the Tabernacle and, for them, that is Bethany. I hope it is for you too! Bethany is trust, the warmth of a home, intimacy. Beloved friends of Jesus.”[4] We want the Tabernacle closest to us to be a place where Jesus feels as much at home as in Bethany. We want to adorn it with the fragrance of our struggle, so often more a matter of wishes than results.

Martha has a very discreet role in the scene we contemplate on this Monday of Holy Week. She prepares the dinner during which Mary will anoint the feet of Jesus. With the affection of

a sister and mother she serves her guests. The house would also have been filled with the aroma of that dinner prepared with great love; perhaps she prepared what her Friend especially liked. In these moments, nearing his death, Jesus is comforted by any small sign of affection. Our work, our smile, our charity for those close to us, are the detail he appreciates.

As one more proof of God's infinite Love, our Lord has really stayed in the Tabernacle to be near us. If Mary's love and faith prompted her to show such refined affection for our Lord by anointing his feet in Bethany, love and faith can also lead us to have greater devotion to Jesus' real presence in the Eucharist. Mary doesn't think she is doing anything extraordinary by anointing our Lord's feet with that precious perfume. She acts with the spontaneity of love. Only Christ knows that, in a few days time, he will wash the feet of his apostles. Mary has anticipated this with her gesture. Our Lord, who is grateful for any sign of affection, no matter how small, appreciates her feminine intuition. Perhaps our Lady too witnessed this endearing moment. What a comfort it would be for her, as her Son's hour was drawing near, to see how Jesus felt loved in this home.

## HOLY TUESDAY

“WILL YOU LAY DOWN your life for me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the cock will not crow, till you have denied me three times” (Jn 13:38). The Gospel of today’s Mass foretells the denials on the part of Saint Peter. In the intimate atmosphere of the Last Supper, Peter is surprised by Jesus’ words. He doesn’t understand how he could ever do this. He wants to be faithful until death, and would never permit his Master to be handed over to his enemies to be crucified. Our Lord had already reprimanded him on a previous occasion, when Peter refused to accept Jesus’ words about his future passion and death. But Peter still cannot accept that apparent failure. As the liturgy reminds us this week: “The days of his saving Passion and glorious Resurrection are approaching, by which the pride of the ancient foe is vanquished and the mystery of our redemption in Christ is celebrated.”[1]

In his own way, Saint Peter thinks that he is ready to give his life for Jesus. In fact, he will draw his sword when Jesus is arrested and confront the crowd that comes armed to capture his Lord. He doesn’t lack courage or esteem for Jesus. But experience will teach him that these qualities are not enough. Peter still needs the humility that comes from self-knowledge and, above all, from the knowledge of God.

Jesus continues forming Saint Peter right to the end. These lessons are the most important ones of his life. Peter will not be a rock because of his strength but because of the humility he has gained from knowing Jesus in depth. He needs to experience the insufficiency of his own strength, so that he realizes it is God who is going to uphold him.

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF Peter's betrayal in today's Gospel is accompanied by the announcement of Judas's betrayal, which helps us to grasp the great difference between the two. Peter put his weakness in Jesus' hands. He learned not to focus on his mistakes and his own strength, but to trust in God's goodness, in his divine plans, in his way of doing things. Peter wasn't deceiving Jesus when he told him he would be faithful until death. But he was relying almost exclusively on his own strength, on his own abilities. Judas, in contrast, never acknowledged his betrayal before Jesus, and always tried to keep up appearances. Peter, at least when he was with Christ, didn't care about appearances, although he will succumb to them when questioned by a maid in the High Priest's house. The fisherman from Capernaum could have been helped by these words of Saint Augustine: "Seek out your merits, your righteousness, your motives; and see if you find anything that is not grace." [2] Saint Peter thought that his love for Jesus was already great, sufficient to withstand any test. He found it easier to remain faithful when confronted by the soldiers than when a young girl challenged him. The maid destroyed Peter's confidence in himself. But it was a liberation that he needed. For Peter discovered the need for his own abasement in order to follow

Christ closely. Freed from his own strength and goals, he was able to adapt to God's plans and be faithful.

Saint Bernard said: "Do not consider, you who are a man, what you have suffered, but what He suffered. Learn, from everything that He suffered for you, how much He valued you, and thus his goodness will be evident to you through his humanity. The smaller he became in his humanity, the greater he revealed himself in his goodness; and the more He allowed himself to be abased for me, the more He is dear to me now." [3]

"ALL TOO OFTEN, we think that God works only through our better parts, yet most of his plans are realized in and despite our frailty ... The evil one makes us see and condemn our frailty, whereas the Spirit brings it to light with tender love. Tenderness is the best way to touch the frailty within us ... faith in God includes believing that he can work even through our fears, our frailties and our weaknesses. He also teaches us that amid the tempests of life, we must never be afraid to let the Lord steer our course. At times, we want to be in complete control, yet God always sees the bigger picture." [4]

Saint Therese of the Child Jesus once said: "I understand very well why Saint Peter fell. Poor Peter, he was relying upon himself instead of relying only upon God's strength ... I'm very sure that if Saint Peter had said humbly to Jesus: 'Give me the grace, I beg You, to follow You even to death,' he would have received it immediately ... Before ruling the Church that

is filled with sinners, he had to experience for himself what man is able to do without God's help.”[5]

Having learned this lesson, Saint Peter will be able to place at the service of the redemption all of his abilities – which, although borrowed, are a precious gift – and to rely on the strength of his Lord, who can do everything. As Saint Josemaría said, “when with a burning heart we say ‘yes’ to our Lord, that we will be faithful to him, that we are ready to make any sacrifice, we will also tell him: Jesus, with your grace; my Mother, with your help. I am so fragile. I make so many mistakes, so many small missteps, that I see I am capable – if you leave me – of making big ones!”[6].

## HOLY WENDESDAY

“ONE OF THE TWELVE, who was called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, ‘What will you give me if I deliver him to you?’ And they paid him thirty pieces of silver. And from that moment he sought an opportunity to betray him” (Mt 26:14-16). Traditionally, on Wednesday in Holy Week, the Church remembers the betrayal of Judas. How distant in the heart of this apostle, who was now preparing to betray Jesus, are the first encounters with the one he had considered the Messiah! Judas Iscariot had also been personally chosen by Christ. Alongside Jesus, he could have been as happy as the others, and become one of the pillars of the Church. However, he chose to sell, at the price of a slave, the one who gave him everything. And it was God’s will that Holy Scripture should not silence this fact.

The tragic outcome takes place at the Last Supper, when Jesus is assailed by the anguish of the approaching Passion and the heartbreak of abandonment by those he loved. When they were at supper, he said, “Truly I say to you, one of you will betray me” (Mt 26:21). The other eleven apostles, with experience of their own failings and great trust in Christ’s words, exclaimed in surprise: “‘Is it I, Lord?’ He answered, ‘He who has dipped his hand in the dish with me, will betray me.

The Son of man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born.' Judas, who betrayed him, said, 'Is it I, Master?' He said to him, 'You have said so'" (Mt 26:22-25).

We do not know if Judas ever looked into Jesus' eyes again. He would have discovered no rancor or anger there. Christ, his friend, was still looking at him with the same eagerness with which he had called him a few years earlier to be an apostle, to be alongside him. "What can we do before a God who served us even when he experienced betrayal and abandonment? We cannot betray what we were created for, not abandon what really matters. We are in the world to love him and others. The rest passes away, love remains." [1]

JUDAS'S BETRAYAL was not the folly of an instant, but the result of many small infidelities. In the Gospel according to John we find a significant episode: the criticism of Mary of Bethany's apparent waste in anointing Jesus with precious ointment, a few days before the Passover. Judas dares to criticize her behavior, with an apparently altruistic reason. But "this he said not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief and, as he had the money box, he used to take what was put into it" (Jn 12:6).

However, neither that offense, nor any human weakness, is strong enough to overcome the love of a God who calls each person constantly and who always awaits our return. Saint Josemaría saw in God's way of being, so full of mercy, our true

armor: “We all have shortcomings. But these defects of ours should never lead us to turn our back on God’s call, but to take refuge in it, to clothe ourselves in this divine goodness, as the warriors of old clothed themselves in their suit of armor.”[2]

Saint Augustine recommends humble petition before God as the best way to face our own fragility. Referring specifically to Judas Iscariot, he says: “After he betrayed Him, and repented of it, if he prayed through Christ, he would ask for pardon; if he asked for pardon, he would have hope; if he had hope, he would hope for mercy.”[3] Our Lord didn’t want Judas to perish, just as he does not want anyone to perish. Even in his own arrest he tries to bring him to his senses, calling him “friend” and accepting the disciple’s kiss. Perhaps even on the Cross Christ was hoping for his apostle to return and to be able to forgive him, as he did the repentant thief.

PETER, too, on that night of betrayal, denies our Lord three times. He who was to be the foundation of the Church wept for his sin with tears of love. Judas, in contrast, lacked the humility to return to his Lord to acknowledge his sin. Peter held firm to hope, while Judas lost hope, not trusting in God’s mercy.

Commenting on this Gospel passage, Saint Josemaría said: “Look how great the virtue of hope is! Judas recognized Christ’s sanctity, and repented of the crime he had committed. So much so that he took the money that was

the price for his treason and threw it down in front of those who had given it to him as his reward for his betrayal. But he lacked hope, which is the virtue needed to return to God. If he had had hope, he still could have been a great apostle. In any case, we don't know what took place in the heart of that man, whether he responded to God's grace in the last moment. Only God knows what happened in his heart.

So never lose hope, never despair, even though you have done the most foolish thing possible. All you have to do is speak out, repent, and let yourself be led by the hand, and everything will be put right.”[4] This is something we can learn from today's Gospel. No matter how great our offenses, God's mercy is always greater. Everything can be healed if we turn to our Lord and open our heart to grace so that Christ can heal our wounds. “Fear and shame, which stop us from being sincere, are the greatest enemies of our perseverance. We are made of clay; but if we speak clearly, the clay acquires the strength of bronze.”[5] This is the strength that the humility of Saint Peter, the rock of the Church, attained. And it is the strength that we ask Jesus for through Mary, his mother, and also our mother.

## HOLY THURSDAY

“NOW BEFORE the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.’ The reader of this verse from Saint John’s Gospel is brought to understand that a great event is about to take place. The introduction is full of tender affection ... Let us begin,” Saint Josemaria advises us, “by asking the Holy Spirit, from this moment on, to give us the grace to understand every word and gesture of Christ.”[1] Today, our eagerness to be attentive to all that our Lord does leads us to contemplate his eloquent gesture of washing his apostles’ feet.

At the Last Supper, with the Passion now near, the atmosphere was one of love, intimacy and recollection. “Since Jesus knew that the Father had placed everything in his hands and that he had gone out from God and was returning to God, he rose from supper, took off his robe, took a towel and put it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples’ feet and to wipe them with the towel which he had put around his waist” (Jn 12:3-5). The apostles would have been shocked to

see Jesus doing something normally only carried out by a servant. But over time they would have come to understand what Jesus wanted to tell them. Even today we may find it difficult to imagine God putting himself in such a position, wiping the dust and dirt from his friends' feet with his own hands.

Letting Christ wash us means recognizing that we cannot purify, clean or sanctify ourselves. "This truth is hard to grasp: if I do not let the Lord serve me, wash me, strengthen me, forgive me, I will not enter the Kingdom of Heaven ... God saved us by serving us. We often think we are the ones who serve God. No, he is the one who freely chose to serve us, for he loved us first. It is difficult to love and not be loved in return. And it is even more difficult to serve if we do not let ourselves be served by God." [2] This is the Christian paradox: it is God who acts first; it is He who takes the initiative. This is why, before undertaking any apostolic work, it is so important to learn to receive what God wants to give us, to let him cleanse us again and again.

THE SIGHT of Jesus washing his apostles' feet should never cease to amaze us. But his love and humility go infinitely further during the supper: "He took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body, which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me.' And in the same way, after supper, he took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; as often as you drink it, do this in remembrance of me'" (1 Cor 11:23-25)

Our Lord “instituted this sacrament as a perpetual memorial of his Passion, as a fulfillment of the ancient figures, as the greatest miracle He had performed and the greatest consolation for those He would leave saddened by his absence.”[3] Jesus gives himself to us; he becomes bread and wine for us. It is at once a sign of superabundant love and the greatest possible expression of humility. The Sacrament of the Eucharist enables us to identify ourselves with the Beloved, to become one and the same with Him, to be united as intimately as possible with God. Saint Josemaría said that “our Lord Jesus Christ, as though all the other proofs of his mercy were insufficient, institutes the Eucharist so that he can always be close to us. We can only understand up to a point that he does so because Love moves him, who needs nothing, not to want to be separated from us. The Blessed Trinity has fallen in love with man.”[4]

We cannot get over our astonishment. No matter how much we consider all that God the Father has given us, we will never be able to understand it: “It is the medicine of immortality, the antidote to death, the remedy enabling us to live in Christ forever.”[5] We do not deserve such great care, affection and attention. We want to try to respond as well as possible, but to do so we need God’s help. “What comes first is not our effort, or moral capacity. Christianity is first and foremost a gift: God gives himself to us. He does not give something, but himself ... This is why the central act of Christian life is the Eucharist: gratitude for having received his gifts, joy for the new life that he gives us.”[6]

IN THE PRIEST'S WORDS before the consecration we see Jesus' grateful attitude towards God the Father: "he took bread and, giving thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying...". We want to have the same attitude today, on the eve of the Passion. Generosity grows naturally from gratitude for the new life we have received, and we want to share it with others. We want to try to love those Jesus loves, as he loves them: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another" (Jn 13:34). Through Christ, with Him and in Him, we are capable of loving to the end. Like Jesus, we kneel before people to clean their feet. We understand their miseries and carry them on our shoulders.

Judgment, envy and comparisons disappear, transformed into petition, joy and gratitude to God for the wonders he works in others. "The Most Blessed Eucharist contains the entire spiritual good of the Church, that is, Christ himself, our Pasch and Living Bread, which by the action of the Holy Spirit through his very flesh gives life to men." [7] From there we draw the strength we need to bring Christ's life to the hearts of the people around us, and to every corner of the world.

Holy Thursday, the day God gave the Church the Sacrament of the Eucharist, is also a day to pray for the holiness of all priests, that they may always serve the Church with the same love our Lord had. With our prayer we can help them make a reality of the deepest desire that moves them as priests: "This practical aspect of service is important: that it is not we who

## RESOURCES FOR PRAYER

choose what to do, but we are servants of Christ in the Church. We work as the Church tells us, where the Church calls us, and we try to be precisely this: servants who do not do their own will, but the will of the Lord. Let us truly be in the Church ambassadors for Christ and servants of the Gospel.”[8]

Among so many other gifts, during these days Jesus will also give us the gift of his Mother. We turn to our Lady, the principal witness of Christ’s Sacrifice, asking for help to live a life of humble gratitude for all we have received.

## GOOD FRIDAY

“MY GOD, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Mt 27:46). “Jesus experienced total abandonment in a situation he had never before experienced in order to be one with us in everything. He did it for me, for you, for all of us; he did it to say to us: ‘Do not be afraid, you are not alone. I experienced all your desolation in order to always be close to you.’”[1] Above all, Christ is afflicted by the suffering that we, the men and women of every age, experience as a result of sin: “Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children” (Lk 23:28).

No human suffering can make Christ turn away from his determination to save us. “His nailed arms are open to each human being and they invite us to draw near to him, certain that he accepts us and clasps us in an embrace of infinite tenderness.”[2] The Good Friday liturgy begins with the priest prostrating himself on the ground. This was Jesus’ position in the Garden of Olives. All of mankind’s sins, all human suffering and loneliness – ours too – crushed him to the ground, and he turned to God the Father for strength.

Jesus came into the world to repair the evil we have inflicted on ourselves and on others. He wants to give us back our freedom and joy. His love for us is boundless, and he assures

us: “my yoke is easy and my burden is light” (Mt 11:30). Our sins do not need to have the last word if we allow Jesus to speak, if we let him tell us he loves us and does not reproach us for all this suffering. Today we remember that “Jesus has fallen that we might get up again, each and every time.”[3]

ONE OF THE REASONS we sin is that we mistakenly think God’s will is an obstacle to our freedom. This is what happened to Adam, our first father. But God wants us to be happy. He wants us to let ourselves be loved by him. “We are free only if we stand in the truth of our being, if we are united to God. Then we become truly ‘like God’ – not resisting God, ignoring him, or denying him. In his anguished prayer on the Mount of Olives, Jesus resolved the false opposition between obedience and freedom, and opened the path to freedom. Let us ask the Lord to draw us into this ‘yes’ to God’s will, and thus to make us truly free.”[4]

We are eager to thank our Lord for the sacrifice he willingly accepted in order to free us from death. Jesus is in agony to the point of sweating blood, but his trust in his Father never wavers, and he continues in prayer. “He approaches us, who are asleep. Arise, pray – He says again – lest you enter into temptation (Lk 22:46).”[5] Hours later, the fury of all the sins of mankind falls on Jesus’ innocent body. The ingratitude of our hearts wraps our Lord in solitude. “You and I are unable to speak. Words are not needed. Look at Him, look at Him... slowly.”[6]

“Sometimes it may seem as though God does not react to evil,

as if he is silent. And yet, God has spoken, he has replied, and his answer is the Cross of Christ: a word which is love, mercy, forgiveness. It also reveals a judgment, namely that God, in judging us, loves us. Let us remember this: God judges us by loving us. If I embrace his love then I am saved; if I refuse it, then I am condemned, not by him, but my own self, because God never condemns, he only loves and saves.”[7]

OUR LORD’S wounds, through which his most precious blood poured out, are a serene refuge for our own pain and affliction. In Christ’s wounds we are safe. Cleansed by his redeeming Blood, nothing can daunt us. “When we really come to admire and love the most sacred Humanity of Jesus, we will discover each of his Wounds, one by one ... We will feel the need to enter into each one of his most Holy Wounds: to be purified and strengthened, rejoicing in his redeeming Blood. We will go there like the doves which, in the words of Scripture, find shelter from the storm in the crevices in the rocks. We hide in this refuge to find the intimacy of Christ.”[8]

And in our contemplation we will savor the Church’s strong and tender words today: “Sweet the timber, sweet the iron, sweet the burden that they bear!”[9] It is “the luminous sign of love, of God’s immense love, of something that we could never have asked for, imagined or expected: God bent down over us, he lowered himself, even to the darkest corner of our lives, in order to stretch out his hand and draw us to himself, to bring us all the way to himself.”[10] This is the

## RESOURCES FOR PRAYER

truth of Good Friday: on the Cross, Christ, our redeemer, restored our dignity to us. And we want, even more intensely, to nail ourselves willingly to his Cross, to associate ourselves with his redemption and have our wretchedness washed clean by his Blood.

At the end of this time of prayer, we direct our eyes to the foot of the Cross. There we see our sorrowful mother standing, accompanied by a few women and a young man. No other pain can compare to theirs. Christ needed to have his Mother close to him during these moments, and now we need her even more.

## HOLY SATURDAY

IT COULD BE that Holy Saturday is “the day of the Easter Triduum that we most neglect, anxious to move from Friday’s Cross to Sunday’s Alleluia.” To prevent this from happening to us, we can focus on the women who accompanied our Lady at all times. “For them, as for us, it was the darkest hour. But in this situation the women did not remain paralyzed. They did not give in to the dark forces of regret and remorse. They did not withdraw into pessimism. They did not flee from reality. They did something simple and extraordinary: in their homes they prepared perfume for the Body of Jesus ... Without knowing it, in the darkness of that Sabbath, these women were preparing for the dawn of the ‘first day of the week,’ the day that would change history.”

Today, Christ lies in the tomb. Friendly hands have lovingly placed him there, near Calvary, in the tomb owned by Joseph of Arimathea. Where are the apostles? The Gospels tell us nothing, but perhaps in the evening of that Sabbath they came, one by one, to the Upper Room, where a few days earlier they had gathered with the Master. How discouraged their conversations now were! They had betrayed Jesus. Their dejection must have been so great that perhaps they even thought of abandoning everything and going back to the way things were, as if the last three years had been only a dream.

However, “in the silence of Holy Saturday, filled with God’s boundless love, we live in expectation of the dawn of the third day, the dawn of the triumph of God’s love, the dawn of the light that allows the eyes of the heart to see life, difficulties and suffering in a new way. Hope illuminates our failures, our disappointments, our bitterness, which seem to mark the collapse of everything.”

THE DIFFERENT REACTION of the holy women is striking: they were faithful to the end. They watched attentively how events were unfolding so that, after the Sabbath rest, they could return and finish embalming Jesus’ Body. Their discouragement is understandable: neither the apostles nor they were yet witnesses of Christ’s resurrection. In spite of everything, they do not want to forego this final service. Their affection is stronger than death.

The courage of Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus also is an example for us. “In the hour of loneliness, of total abandonment and of scorn, it is then that they stand up for him. With them,” said Saint Josemaría, “I too will go up to the foot of the Cross; I will press my arms tightly round the cold Body, the corpse of Christ, with the fire of my love. I will unnailed it, with my reparation and mortifications. I will wrap it in the new winding-sheet of my clean life, and I will bury it in the living rock of my breast, where no one can tear it away from me!”[4] They have nothing to gain, they may lose everything, but they still want to offer Jesus their affection.

But Holy Saturday could not have been a sad day for our Lady, even if it was a painful one. Faith, hope, and the most tender love for her divine Son would have given her peace, enabling her to await the resurrection with serene longing. Mary would also have remembered the last words of Jesus: “Woman, behold your son” (Jn 19:26). And she would already have begun to exercise her motherhood with those men and women who had followed Christ from the earliest times. Our Lady would have tried to revive the faith and hope of the apostles, reminding them of the words they had heard a short time earlier from our Lord’s lips: “They will mock him, and spit upon him, and scourge him, and kill him; and after three days he will rise” (Mk 10:34). Our Lord had spoken very clearly so that, when the time of tribulation came, they would hold fast to his word in faith. Along with the painful memory of the sufferings endured by Jesus, a great relief would come over her motherly heart at the thought that everything was now over: “The work of our Redemption has been accomplished. We are now children of God, because Jesus has died for us and his death has ransomed us.”

ALONGSIDE OUR LADY, in the light of her hope, the hearts of each of the apostles would have been enkindled. “What if all this is true?” perhaps they. “What if Jesus has really risen, as he promised?” In the past they had all been united around the Son. Now they would like to be close to his Mother. Mary may even have sent one of them to look for those who hadn’t turned up yet. She may have hoped to find Thomas to comfort his fear-filled heart. In the moment of trial, they were eager to turn to Mary, and “with her, how easy it is.”

## RESOURCES FOR PRAYER

We want to find a support for our faith in hers: especially when things become difficult, when moments of darkness come. Saint Bernard assures us from his own experience: “If the winds of temptation arise, if you trip on the stumbling blocks of tribulations, look to the Star, call on Mary.” God wants her to be for us an advocate, a mother, a sure way to find the light again in times of darkness.

Those who have recourse to the powerful intercession of our Lady know that it has never been said that anyone who trusted in her was left unaided, no matter how difficult the moment or how great the confusion in their heart. And we can say to Jesus: “In spite of the sadness we may harbor, we will feel that we must hope, because with you the Cross blossoms into Resurrection, because you are with us in the darkness of our nights; you are certainty in our uncertainties, word in our silences, and nothing can ever rob us of the love you have for us.” Close to Mary, mother of hope, our faith in the merits of her Son Jesus will grow strong once again.

*Texts from Christ's Presence in Christians, an Easter Sunday Homily by St. Josemaria Escriva*

## EASTER SUNDAY

What would Jesus' Resurrection have been like? How did his tortured Body come back to life and become a glorious Body? We don't know. The only witnesses to this astounding event were the empty tomb, with the winding cloths and the face cloth. These silent witnesses are the first to announce that something entirely new has happened.

John is the first to "read" and understand the message of the linen cloths and the face cloth. A few days earlier he had been the courageous disciple who stood firm at the foot of the Cross, next to his Lord. Now he is the disciple who runs the fastest to seek Christ. The same one who stood patiently close by during the time of trial now moves the quickest in seeking Him. He is sustained by the same strength in both situations: his love for our Lord. And his love is rewarded. God grants him a special grace to read in the folded cloths the greatest message in history: Jesus is alive!

But John isn't the only one who runs that Easter Sunday morning. Before him Mary Magdalene had run to tell the apostles the astounding news. The strength of her love is also very intense. Love for our Lord had led her to rise early that morning. She wanted to do one last service for Jesus, without expecting anything in return. And she will be the first to contemplate the Risen Lord in his glory, and to proclaim to the Church that He is alive.

## RESOURCES FOR PRAYER

Peter too runs. He is a bit slower in reaching the tomb. He has neither Mary Magdalene's impetuosity nor John's youthfulness. But he reaches the tomb and is the first to enter. He sees the signs of the Resurrection – the linen cloths and the face cloth – even if it takes him longer to believe, perhaps because the wound he carries is deeper. The pain of the Master's death is joined to the memory of his having abandoned Him during the Passion. But despite everything, he too runs. His love is still there; it just has to grow stronger.

How difficult it was for the disciples to believe that Jesus had come back to life! And how difficult it can be for us to accept that Jesus upholds our own lives! Sometimes the tomb seems to prevail: problems at work or at home, flaws in our own character, opposition to Christian values in certain environments... But if we look closely at these situations, we can surely find signs of hope: the persons who are tenaciously trying to do what is right and to defend the good, a solution to a difficult problem that suddenly appears... These are signs that are waiting for us to read them with faith, like those linen cloths on the morning of the Resurrection.

To read the signs God gives us, we need to welcome the gift of faith. We too need the sincere eagerness to seek our Lord, also when it seems He has left us. That is what Mary Magdalene, John, and Peter did that Easter morning. They were still seeking Christ; they wanted to offer Him a service, even though they thought He was dead. Our Lord rewards their faithful love with the joy of finding Him alive, luminous with the glory of Easter.

**youth**  
OPUS DEI



VISIT THE YOUTH WEBSITE AND  
DISCOVER ALL THE RESOURCES!

# 1 PRAYERS AFTER MASS

## SAINT JOSEMARÍA ESCRIVÁ

**Consulate of Honduras, June 4, 1937**

Let the eyes of our body close, and the eyes of our soul open; let our ears be at peace and let us listen to the voice of our Jesus.

Let us speak to Him in loving confidence, as intimate friends, as brothers, as children. Jesus: to see You, to speak to You!

To remain like this, contemplating You, lost in the vastness of Your beauty, and never, never cease this contemplation!

Oh, Christ, who could see You! Who could see You and be wounded with love for You, and, intoxicated and sustained by this love, completely forget the worldly things!

Christ, who could see You! Who could see You and remain lovingly sunk in Your bosom, loving You without end and being loved by You, reliving the charm of that ancient legend of the monk who spent centuries—centuries that were but a moment—entranced in the presence of Your infinite beauty!  
(...)

Three centuries of the world, long, full of devastation, noise, and agitation, were but a moment before the eternity of God. Jesus: to see You, to speak to You, to love You, and to feel loved by You! To forget the bonds of this world, free ourselves from its yoke, and give You full possession of our heart, open to You and only to You.

## RESOURCES FOR PRAYER

You know, Lord, that I love You. Yes – I confess it, like Peter – You know that, despite my misery, I love You, and that in the midst of my madness, I have never stopped loving You. So multiply, with Your power and Your mercy, this love, until it has no limit or measure. Wound the heart of this poor soul and the hearts of all my children, and apply Your cauterization so that they will never again desire to taste the things of this world. Wrap us in the flames of Your love, and let them consume, heal, and purify us.

My God, may we be Yours now, only Yours, and never be attracted by the pleasures and affections of this earth. Oh, Jesus, if on this day, in which we celebrate the feast of Your Sacred Heart, You would enclose us in it, never to leave again!

Your cauterization, Jesus our Lord, over our hearts, so that it may only aspire to You, so that it may despise the miserable distractions of this world! I want to see myself now, my God, beside the wound of Your chest; and think of all my children, all those who are now living members of this living Body of Your Work. Naming them, I will consider their qualities, their virtues, their defects, and then I will beg You, pushing them toward You, one by one:

"In!" I will place them in Your Heart. This is what I want to do with each one and with all, until the end of the world, to be part of this supernatural family. All, united in the Heart of Christ, all made one by love for Him and all detached from the things of the earth by the strength of this love, accompanied by mortification. We want to be like the first Christians; we will revive their spirit in the world, just as before.

## RESOURCES FOR PRAYER

Let us begin, then, by making real within the Work that affirmation: congregavit nos in unum Christi amor. Place Your cauterization, Jesus our Lord, upon us, however painful it may be! Because You know, Lord, that our hearts are of flesh, opened by many breaches to the assault of the enemy.

Ah, if I could keep within mine the hearts of all my children! It is not because they do not fit in it, for You, Lord, have enlarged it; but why keep them, if my heart is so weak, if the walls that defend it have so many cracks? But if I may ask You, my God, to keep them; that, possessed by Your love, they may be strong against the seduction of sensual things. Let us place this love for You far above the deceitful pleasures of the earth.

My Mother, I trust in you, I hope in you; intercede for me, so that – through your prayers – the Lord may grant me what I ask of Him.

## 2 PRAYERS AFTER MASS

### BLESSED ÁLVARO DEL PORTILLO

Sweden, 1989

Kneeling before You, Lord, we are now especially a temple in which You dwell. There are many tabernacles at this moment in the oratory: the tabernacle, made with love, but only with metals, and this other tabernacle created directly by You, which is each one of us.

My son, God is within you. The same One who was born of the Virgin Mary, who lived for thirty years on this earth, passing through it doing good – *pertransiit benefaciendo* – and who then died to open the doors of Heaven for us. We have just celebrated Your Death and Your Resurrection on the altar, and You, my God, the Word made flesh, have repeated the miracle. You came to the earth with Your Body, Your Blood, Your Soul, and Your Divinity. This altar has become the throne upon which You sit to reign in the world, and then You have given Yourself to us as food and have remained among us. My God, what must have been the effect of Your presence in my soul! How You must have made my soul shine, which tends to fall, but which You want to lift up! What a wonder!

In this moment – our Father liked to consider it – each one of us carries in the center of our hearts Jesus, the Word of God made flesh, and with Him, the Father and the Holy Spirit. With the Most Holy Trinity, my son, around your soul, the entire heavenly court revolves, praising God: *Hosanna in excelsis Deo!*

## RESOURCES FOR PRAYER

Hosanna in my body! My God, how can I repay You for so many blessings? That You have set Your gaze upon me and have said to me: *meus es tu, sequere me!* - You are mine, follow Me! Since then, how many graces, Lord! Many times we have not known how to take advantage of them. I have not made good use of them, but You continue to love me, You continue to forgive me, You continue to seek me, and You continue to give Yourself to me every day as food so that I may be able, with Your grace, to walk the paths of the earth as You did, doing good.

So many times, instead of doing good, I waste time. What a shame, my God, forgive me! I ask You that from now on, I begin a new life, that the reception of this Bread of Life may truly be effective in my soul. I think of that bread the Old Testament speaks of, *subcinericius panis*, that bread baked under the ashes, which gave strength and vigor to the prophet Elijah to walk for forty days and forty nights. We have received the Bread of Angels, and we have the strength to walk through all of life with Your grace. We will have to keep coming frequently to Your forgiveness, my God, and we ask for it from now on, because we want to be faithful. Forgive our infidelities. Help us to put more effort, more strength, more desire to fight each day. And all for love.

My children, make firm resolutions to want to be apostles of Jesus Christ. But an apostle of Jesus must be very united to Him. We will seek Him in professional work and in the ordinary circumstances of our day; we will go after Him as a lover follows the person he loves, with compliments, with sweet words, with desires to receive Him.

## RESOURCES FOR PRAYER

Lord, never separate Yourself from me, for I do not want to lose You. I ask this of my Mother in Heaven. She, who was semper fidelis, will grant me the grace of faithfulness. My Mother, make me live by love, make me faithful in little and in much, in the great and in the small. Lord, I ask You that I never grow tired of starting over. By starting again and again, with Your grace, You will make me humble. Lord, I give myself to You. You have given Yourself to me, and it is right that I respond in kind. Here I am. I offer You all my powers: my memory, my understanding, my will, my possessions and everything I have, all is Yours. Govern me, for that way I will come out ahead. Make me, Lord, good and faithful.

# 3 PRAYERS AFTER MASS

## FATHER JAVIER ECHEVARRÍA

**Lithuania, November 1994**

¡How much we need You, Lord, how much we need You! We would like, as our Father often pleaded, to be entirely Yours and speak exclusively of You, live with You, and give Your life to others. In thanking You for the immense blessing of having You in our body, we realize our personal smallness. My God, how can I repay You for the fact that You, being the Being who cannot be contained in Heaven or on earth, come to take refuge in my poor soul, which is worth nothing, which, as Don Álvaro liked to say, is less than nothing, since it is capable of doing evil?

My God, with You dwelling within us in Your real presence, enlighten us so that we never desire to do evil and instead always act with You, by Your hand. Helped by You, transform us, Lord. Make us other Christs, the same Christ, as our Father asked, with all that this entails: to love You totally, overcoming the resistance of fallen nature.

Jesus, thank You because You love us; thank You because You understand us; thank You because You do not reject us; thank You because every day You come to us as the greatest lover that there can be, in Heaven and on earth. It is necessary that every day we give You thanks with this same strength. My God, taking advantage of the fact that You are within us, let us say: Jesus, I want to correspond to You with the infinitude of Your love, in which my poor love is absorbed, and thus offer You something worthy of You. 52

## RESOURCES FOR PRAYER

We also thank You because You want to work through us. We ask that all the members of Opus Dei, from all times, transform our days into a continuous act of thanksgiving, for the mysterious and infinite goodness of Your real presence in the Eucharist. My Mother, I ask for myself, for all my daughters, for all my sons, for all men and for all women of all times: My Mother, may we take care of Jesus with our whole lives.

# EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

Have I rejected or neglected my faith or not bothered to find out more about it? Have I refused to defend my faith, or been embarrassed of it?

Have I taken the Lord's name in vain? Have I experimented with the occult or put my trust in fortune-tellers or horoscopes? Have I shown disrespect for any holy things, places or people?

Have I chosen not to attend Mass on Sundays or Holy Days of Obligation? Have I left God out by not praying?

Have I received Holy Communion with a grave sin on my conscience? Have I received Holy Communion without proper reverence or thanksgiving?

Have I been unhelpful at home? Have I lacked love for my parents?

Have I been impatient, angry or jealous? Have I fostered resentments or been unwilling to forgive? Have I sulked or given in to sarcasm? Have I been hateful or judgemental in thoughts or deeds?

Have I failed to work properly at school? Have I given in to laziness? Have I treated teachers and other adults with disrespect?

## RESOURCES FOR PRAYER

Have I been violent or taken part in fights? Have I hurt anyone by speaking badly about them or by engaging in gossip on the internet? Have I betrayed secrets or told things simply to hurt others?

Have I spoken in an obscene way? Have I looked at obscene magazines, websites or videos? Have I been involved in impure behaviour on my own or with someone else?

Have I told lies to excuse myself, to hurt others or make myself look more important?

Have I stolen anything? Have I misused or damaged the property of others?

Have I been jealous of others, of their looks, their popularity, their good work? Do I set my heart on possessing things?

Have I encouraged others to do wrong in any way?

Have I consumed alcohol excessively or taken drugs?

Have I been vain or selfish in my thoughts or actions?

Have I preferred physical comfort to service of others? Have I neglected the responsibility to bring others closer to God through example and word?

# After Confession

TAKEN FROM THE BOOK "AHORA COMIENZO"

## TO BEGIN!

Now that you are clean, begin!

Surely you didn't think—you, I say—of staying locked up forever in that attic! Open your eyes to the supernatural life. You've taken a monumental step with Confession, but that's only the first of many steps to take.

Say to the Lord, now that you've just returned: 'Now I begin!' We'll have to repeat this a thousand times. And a thousand times is an understatement: a thousand times every year! What less! When we fall, we'll get up and repeat in God's presence: Now I begin.

But always with a different tune: – We say it with colors. – We say it in verse. – We say it in prose. – We say it singing. – We whisper it, we shout it:

## NOW I BEGIN!

We couldn't care less about what's in the corner, behind the door! Let it be taken away!

What matters is the road ahead. It's colossal, impressive, the adventure that opens up to us. But who says it's not for you? Of course, it is!

## DON'T WALK ALONE!

“If we look for the word 'Christianity' in the New Testament, we won't find it. But we will find another word that has the same meaning: path. In the Acts of the Apostles and in the Letters of Saint Peter, we are spoken of the Path of the Lord, the paths of truth, paths of justice, paths of salvation. Thus, the path comes to mean the way that we men must follow according to the doctrine of Jesus Christ.

Where shall we walk? There are paths opened in the wilderness that lead to peace, and there are trails that end in death. As long as there is life—only death leaves things irreparable—we can choose the paths we want: the path of wisdom or the path of foolishness. The latter may be a broad road that is easy to walk on but ends poorly. What matters is not the surface of the roads, but that they lead us to happiness forever, forever! Upon us rests the responsibility of choosing.

Don't walk alone! Do it with God, as the chosen people did, through the desert toward the Promised Land. Christian tradition has always seen in this journey through the desert a figure of the Church's and the faithful souls' march toward eternity. With God, we go safely. He cares for us and fights for us. He holds us up—Scripture says—'as a man holds his child.' He never leaves us alone. The Lord did not bring us into the world just to abandon us while we stumble through the valleys. God counts on our complaints, murmurs, worries, and anxieties; but, man, He also counts on our faithfulness. He provides the strength, and we, the effort in the walk. His help is evident.

**DESPITE THE PAINS, ANXIETIES, AND MISFORTUNES, DO NOT BE SAD, TAKE HEART, BE FILLED WITH JOY, KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE PATH, HOLD ON TO GOD'S HAND, AND KEEP MOVING FORWARD ON THE WAY.**



# 03 FOLLOWING THE PATH OF THE EARLY CHRISTIANS

# FOLLOWING THE PATH OF THE EARLY CHRISTIANS

START  
HERE

PLACES

ROUTES

ROME  
PILGRIM  
APP

FOLLOWING  
THE  
FOOTSTEPS OF  
ST JOSEMARIA

UNIV  
2026

CHRISTIAN  
ROME



\*Hyperlinks for each route on Google Maps.



\*Hyperlinks for the audioguide of each route

The world is full of normal people with normal defects and normal talents and normal circumstances. Every one of these people has the potential to transform the world once they choose to take the first step - out of their comfort zone. The first Christians, walking through these very streets of Rome, took that first step by living their Christian vocation in a world that didn't yet understand the meaning of Christianity.

**They were the protagonists of the 1st Century. We are the protagonists of today. What can we learn by walking in their footsteps?**

“Please, do not leave it to others to be protagonists of change. You are the ones who hold the future! Through you, the future enters into the world. I ask you also to be protagonists of this transformation. You are the ones who hold the key to the future! Continue to fight apathy and to offer a Christian response to the social and political troubles emerging in different parts of the world. I ask you to build the future, to work for a better world. Dear young people, please, do not be bystanders in life. Get involved! Jesus was not a bystander. He got involved. Don't stand aloof, but immerse yourselves in the reality of life, as Jesus did.” Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit* no. 174



**DON'T STAND ALOOF, BUT IMMERSE YOURSELVES IN THE REALITY OF LIFE, AS JESUS DID!**

THROUGH THEIR FOOTSTEPS

# PLACES TO VISIT



- St. Peter's Square
- St. Peter's Basilica
- Vatican Museums
- Castel Sant'Angelo
- Basilica of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem
- Basilica of St. John Lateran
- Basilica of St. Mary Major
- Santa Prassede
- San Silvestro e Martino ai Monti
- St. Peter in Chains
- Esquilino
- Holy Stairs
- Santa Maria in Aracoeli
- Piazza del Campidoglio
- Roman Forum
- Palatine Hill
- Colosseum
- Four Crowned Martyrs
- Navona Square
- San Luigi dei Francesi
- Pantheon
- Santa Maria sopra Minerva
- St. Ignatius of Loyola
- Trevi Fountain
- Basilica of the Holy Apostles
- Church of the Gesù
- Basilica of St. Clement
- Basilica of Sts. John and Paul
- Basilica of Sts. Nereus and Achilleus



# OUR LADY OF PEACE



## GUIDE OUR LADY OF PEACE

Our Lady of Peace is the Prelatic Church of Opus Dei located at Viale Bruno Buozzi 75. The mortal remains of St Josemaria Escriva rest here. Millions of people throughout the world turn to the intercession of this great saint. Not only is Our Lady of Peace where we find St Josemaria, but within its walls we also discover his story, his sense of humour, his dreams, and where he got his strength from.

*“Holy Mary is the Queen of peace, and thus the Church invokes her. So when your soul or your family are troubled, or things go wrong at work, in society or between nations, cry out to her without ceasing. Call to her by this title: ‘Regina pacis, ora pro nobis — Queen of peace, pray for us.’ Have you at least tried it when you have lost your calm? You will be surprised at its immediate effect.”*

*Saint Josemaría Escrivá*

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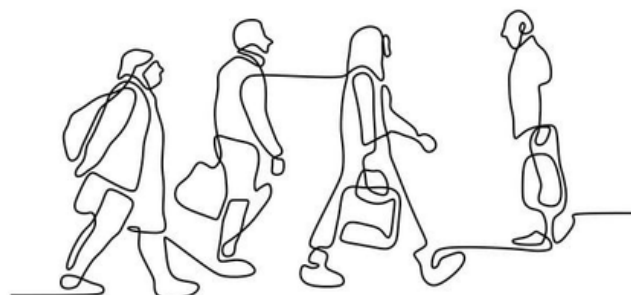
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# Rome: In the footsteps of St Josemaria and Blessed Alvaro

“Rome will leave a mark on your soul, a deep and lasting imprint, if you have made good use of your time there. And you will know how to be more faithful children of the Church, and have a more supernatural love for the Holy Father.”

- St Josemaria

These articles can help us walk the streets of Rome in the shoes of St Josemaria Escriva and Blessed Alvaro del Portillo:

- [St Josemaria on Love for the Pope](#)
- [Looking for Our Lady in Rome](#) with Blessed Alvaro
- [Rome in the Footsteps of St Josemaria](#) (available in Spanish only, but can be translated in-browser)



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